

“Following the anniversary of Iran’s disputed presidential election, Congress must reaffirm its commitment to supporting democracy and freedom around the world,” said Costa. “Iran’s repeated defiance to the global community’s calls for disarmament is unacceptable. Congress must respond with additional sanctions and unified opposition to this abusive regime. Iran’s actions threaten our allies and the stability of the entire region”

Iran’s post-election crackdown following the disputed presidential election on June 12, 2009, was a human rights disaster. Violations of human rights have been pervasive throughout the history of the regime. Before and after the election, Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, Basij militia, and police arbitrarily arrested thousands of peaceful protesters and dissidents, including students, women’s rights activists, lawyers, and journalists in a clear effort to intimidate critics and stifle dissent.

Along with expressing opposition to Iran’s weapons program and human rights violations, Costa’s resolution denounces the continued violence against the Iranian people by the Government of Iran and pro-government militias. The resolution also reaffirms the universality of individual rights and the importance of democratic and fair elections.

As a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Costa has been a vocal proponent of tougher sanctions on Iran. In April, Costa was named a House conferee to participate in House-Senate conference committee negotiations on H.R. 2194, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2009.

Costa was joined by Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX), along with Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Howard Berman (D-CA), Ranking Member Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-NY), Rep. Dan Burton (R-IN), Rep. Ron Klein (D-FL) and Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN) in introducing the resolution.

“Since the fraudulent elections, hundreds of thousands of Iranians have taken to the streets in protest,” said Rep. Ted Poe. “They are fighting to be free and many giving their lives for democracy. At this critical time, they need to know that the United States, the leader of the free world, still believes that the pursuit of inalienable rights is worth the sacrifice. I urge my colleagues to send a strong message to the Iranian people that we condemn the human rights violations taking place in their country and that the United States will stand with them in their fight for freedom.”